



Report to the Auburn City Council

Action Item

Agenda Item No.

13

City Manager's Approval

To: Mayor and City Council Members
From: Mike Holmes, Councilmember
Kevin Hanley, Councilmember
Date: January 10, 2011
Subject: Support for Auburn State Recreation Area Long Term Resolution

The Issue

Shall the Council endorse the resolution for submission to State and Federal legislators asking for their support?

Conclusion and Recommendation

By **RESOLUTION**, support a long term solution for Auburn State Recreation Area (ASRA).

Background

With the possible loss of federal funding for ASRA at the end of 2012 it is imperative that we act now to get further attention from State and Federal legislators. A similar resolution is scheduled to be on the Placer County Board of Supervisor's agenda at their January 11th meeting. The El Dorado Board of Supervisors has been requested to pass the same resolution to demonstrate our regional support for finding a long term solution to this issue. This issue includes maintaining Park Rangers in ASRA and the reestablishment of a long term fuels management agreement between CALFIRE and the Bureau of Reclamation.

Auburn City Council

RESOLUTION CONCERNING FUTURE MANAGEMENT OF THE AUBURN STATE RECREATION AREA

WHEREAS, the lands comprising the Auburn State Recreation Area (ASRA), with their steep forested canyons, scenic beauty, and diverse recreational opportunities, are a unique and irreplaceable asset to the citizens of Auburn;

WHEREAS, most of the lands comprising ASRA are federal property managed by the California Department of Parks and Recreation under contract with the Bureau of Reclamation, an agency within the United States Department of Interior;

WHEREAS, ASRA provides Auburn residents with convenient, close-to-home access to beautiful semi-wilderness river canyons;

WHEREAS, ASRA is an enormously popular recreation destination that attracts nearly one million visitors annually, and is the site of world famous events such as the Tevis Cup Ride and Western States Endurance Run, thereby producing substantial economic benefits to the City of Auburn;

WHEREAS, the ASRA canyonlands have a rich human history and include hundreds of Gold Rush and Native American cultural sites, many of which are eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places;

WHEREAS, the Bureau of Reclamation has cut the Department of Parks and Recreation's budget for ASRA management by more than 20% for fiscal year 2010-2011, and has declared that it may be unable to provide any funding in subsequent years;

WHEREAS, ASRA lands adjacent to the communities of Auburn, Colfax, Foresthill, and other populated areas of Placer County have not been properly managed for fuels reduction and as a result pose a grave and unacceptable risk of catastrophic fire loss to those communities;

WHEREAS, the Bureau of Reclamation has suspended all funding and work on the development of a new plan for the future management of ASRA, and has declined to enter into new agreements with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection for fire protection services on ASRA lands;

WHEREAS, there is a clear and urgent need for immediate changes to ASRA management and funding that will effectively address fire risk and public safety needs, protect natural, cultural and historical resources, and ensure the responsible management of the diverse and growing recreational use of ASRA lands;

IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Auburn City Council calls on the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Interior to take immediate steps, in consultation with the City of Auburn and the California Department of Parks and Recreation, to: (1) designate an appropriate and effective federal land manager for the Auburn State Recreation Area; and (2) provide sufficient funding to protect public safety, responsibly address wildfire prevention and fire suppression needs, properly manage the recreational use of ASRA lands, and protect ASRA's natural, cultural and historical resources.

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